

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01

EB-07 /065 W

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R 140413Z SEP 76
FM USINT BAGHDAD
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3607

S E C R E T BAGHDAD 1337

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT IZ

SUBJECT: DEVELOPING RIVALRIES WITHIN REGIME

1. WITH DETERIORATION OF PRESIDENT BAKR'S HEALTH (BAGHDAD 1329), RIVALRIES FOR SUCCESSION OF POWER WITHIN SENIOR BAATH PARTY RANKS ARE BEGINNING TO BECOME MORE APPARENT. SADDAM HUSSEIN IS STILL CLEARLY THE HEIR, BUT CURRENT BAATH PARTY RULES PROVIDE THAT EITHER CHAIRMAN OR VICE-CHAIRMAN OF RCC MUST BE A MILITARY OFFICER. IN SPITE OF SADDAM HUSSEIN'S RECENT COMMISSIONING, IT IS FAR FROM CLEAR THAT HE WOULD BE ABLE TO QUALIFY AS MILITARY MAN IN EYES OF SENIOR PARTY LEADERSHIP. IF HE BECOMES CHAIRMAN UPON DEATH OR RESIGNATION OF BAKR, IT IS NOT NOW APPARENT WHAT FUTURE ROLE IRAQ'S ARMED FORCES WOULD PLAY OR WHICH MILITARY MAN WOULD BECOME VICE CHAIRMAN. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT SADDAM WILL ATTEMPT TO CHANGE THE RULES AND/OR HOLD NEW REGIONAL COMMAND PARTY ELECTIONS IN NEAR FUTURE.

2. ONLY APPARENT POSSIBLE RIVAL TO SADDAM HUSSEIN AT PRESENT TIME IS FORMER MINISTER OF INDUSTRY, NOW MINISTER OF HOUSING, TAHAA JAZRAWI. MOST BAGHDAD OBSERVERS BELIEVE THAT SADDAM HUSSEIN'S TELEVISED PERFORMANCE LAST WEEK AT LOW-PRODUCTIVITY SEMINAR (REPORTED IN FBIS) WAS THINLY DISGUISED ATTEMPT TO DISCREDIT JAZRAWI WHO IS MAN PRIMARILY RESPONSIBLE FOR EXISTING STRUCTURE OF IRAQ'S INDUSTRIAL ESTABLISHMENT. DURING THIS SEMINAR, SADDAM HUSSEIN STRONGLY ATTACKED PRESIDENT OF SPINNING

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AND WEAVING ORGANIZATION, AMONG OTHERS, FOR INEFFICIENCY AND

LOW PRODUCTIVITY. THIS MAN IS CONSIDERED CLOSE ALLY OF JAZRAWI AND, IN FACT, HEADS ONE OF MORE EFFICIENT INDUSTRIAL ESTABLISHMENTS IN IRAQ. SADDAM HUSSEIN DID NOT MENTION THE RAILWAYS ORGANIZATION OR OTHER PUBLIC CORPORATIONS WHICH ARE GENERALLY CONSIDERED TO BE MUCH LESS WELL MANAGED THAN THE SPINNING AND WEAVING ORGANIZATION. ACCORDING TO LOCAL RUMORS, HEAD OF SPINNING AND WEAVING ORGANIZATION SENT WRITTEN PROTEST TO SADDAM HUSSEIN AFTER THE TELEVISION PERFORMANCE AND HAS SINCE BEEN ARRESTED. ON THIRD DAY OF SEMINAR, MEETINGS WERE BOYCOTTED BY ALL OFFICIALS OF MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY WITH EXCEPTION OF RECENTLY APPOINTED MINISTER AL JASSIM WHO DUTIFULLY APPEARED IN ORDER TO RETAIN HIS PORTFOLIO.

3. JAZRAWI HAS APPARENTLY BUILT A NETWORK OF SUPPORTERS THROUGHOUT IRAQ'S CIVIL SERVICE AND INDUSTRIAL ESTABLISHMENTS AND HAS PROBABLY BEEN ABLE TO USE HIS POSITION AS COMMANDER OF THE BAATHI PEOPLE'S ARMY TO GOOD ADVANTAGE. WE WOULD EXPECT RIVALRY BETWEEN JAZRAWI AND SADDAM HUSSEIN TO BECOME SHARPER AS BAKR'S DEPARTURE FROM SCENE BECOMES MORE IMMINENT. AT PRESENT TIME, SADDAM HUSSEIN SEEMS TO HAVE STRONGER HAND, BUT IT IS STILL TOO EARLY TO MAKE ANY FIRM PREDICTIONS.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: HEALTH, PRESIDENTIAL SUCCESSION, POLITICAL LEADERS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 14 SEP 1976
Decapton Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decapton Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ellisoob
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976BAGHDA01337
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760347-0128
From: BAGHDAD
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760964/aaaaccut.tel
Line Count: 83
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ellisoob
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 03 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <03 MAY 2004 by GarlanWA>; APPROVED <13 OCT 2004 by ellisoob>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: DEVELOPING RIVALRIES WITHIN REGIME
TAGS: PINT, IZ, (HUSSEIN, SADDAM), (AL-BAKR, AHMAD HASAN), (BAKR)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006